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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9459
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS PRIORITY
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 2719
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 1098
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 1059
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 1967
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 2178
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 2802
RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 2780
RUEHBD/AMCONSUL PERTH 0932
RHMCSUU/FBI WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RHHJJPI/USPACOM HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 001298

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SUBJECT: INDONESIAN POLICE ARREST SUSPECTED JI MEMBERS IN
SUMATRA

Classified By: Pol/C Joseph L. Novak, reasons 1.4 (b+d).

¶1. (U) This message was coordinated with Consulate Medan.

¶2. (C) SUMMARY: On July 2, an Indonesian National Police counterterrorist unit raided a house in South Sumatra and arrested at least nine suspected Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) terrorists. During the raid, the police also seized several Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs). Media reports claim that the apparent JI cell was planning attacks in Sumatra. The investigation continues, but the GOI appears to have further eroded the capabilities of JI. END SUMMARY.

¶3. (C) POLICE OPERATION: In the early morning hours of July 2, a police counterterrorist unit raided a house in Palembang, South Sumatra. (Note: Palembang is a large city with a mixed population located approximately 250 miles northwest of Jakarta.) During the operation, Special Detachment 88 (SD-88) police arrested at least nine JI-linked suspects and discovered 22 IEDs, sources told Consulate Medan. Media reports cite a senior INP official as claiming that at least one of the IEDs weighed 11 pounds. The suspects have been reportedly transferred to Jakarta.

¶4. (C) ACTING ON INTEL REPORTS: The police acted on intelligence reports that a Singaporean national who was allegedly a JI associate was living near Palembang. SD-88 surveilled the individual on June 29 and arrested him later that day. The suspect is believed to be a senior member of JI in the Palembang region with links to other JI figures. He is also thought by police to have met with Al-Qaida elements in Afghanistan. (Note: The suspect is variously referred to in the press as "Alim" or "Omar.")

¶5. (C) The INP--based on what we understand--had been surveilling for over a year a JI "Palembang cell" to which

the above suspect allegedly belonged. The police had information that the cell was gathering materials to make IEDs, but the counterterrorist unit was waiting for more evidence of terrorist-related activity before making any arrests. The sudden arrest of the Singaporean national forced the INP to raid the cell's safehouse immediately. (Note: As it happens, the safehouse was located directly behind the compound of the local military commander's office.)

16. (C) ANOTHER FEATHER IN THE CAP?: Media reports claim that the apparent JI group was planning attacks in Sumatra. The investigation continues, but the GOI appears to have further eroded the capabilities of JI.

17. (C) A recent report by an Australian think-tank, the Australian Strategic Policy Institute (ASPI), had questioned the GOI's determination to continue pursuing terrorists as it had in the past, suggesting that a mood of complacency was setting in. The intense surveillance effort and successful operation indicate in concrete terms that the GOI is still aggressively pursuing a counter-terrorist agenda. That said, what has been caught in the SD-88 net needs to be further sifted to find out just how important it is.

HUME